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EXCISE

FRIDAY
AUGUST 27, 1954

Jean Monnet and Jacques Van Helmont came to the office this morning. We talked over the maneuvers now under way on the part of pro-EDC leaders to avert the debate for the time being.

The plan suggested by us in the early hours of the morning was definitely turned down.

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Hughes, Dillon and I lunched at SHAPE with Generals Gruenther, Schuyler and Norstad, and Freddie Reinhardt and Ed Martin. We discussed what sort of strategic plan might be evolved if the EDC fell through and if no German military contribution were forthcoming. Under such circumstances, it would be [redacted] difficult to constitute any reliable defense in Europe against Eastern aggression.

I finished today a/ sketchy assessment of the consequences of eventual French failure to ratify the EDC Treaty. The text follows:

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I do not know what to do with it, although it might be useful.

Geoff Parsons came to see me after a conversation he had [redacted] with René Pleven in connection with an effort to resume the Brussels Conference.

I met Messrs. Blankenhorn and Ophuls at my house. Blankenhorn had been sent down by the Chancellor, who is [redacted] nervous over the forthcoming debate in the French Parliament and wishes to know whether he can do anything helpful at this juncture. I told him in my opinion the most helpful thing would be to remain quite silent, which was the policy I hoped would also be followed by our own people.

I went over to see Margaret Biddle, who had just conversed [redacted] with Pinay. Pinay is worried about the use being made by the anti-EDC people of an alternative plan, supposedly discussed between Mendès-France and Churchill at Chartwell.

The United States has tried to get a direct statement from Eden and Churchill which would dispel the impression being created here that the British are not really much concerned about a failure of the EDC Treaty to be ratified by the French Parliament. I called Margaret's attention to the press release on this subject from the British Foreign Office, published in this morning's London Times, which is satisfactory although it lacks the imprint of either Sir Winston's name or style. We found later in the day it had been deliberately suppressed by the official French Government news agency and was not quoted in any of the French newspapers. We are undertaking to see that it will appear here tomorrow in the French press, which is doing Gladwyn Jebb's work for him!

E. went to Geneva by air today, and she will visit the children at Talloires.

Tommy came to dinner with me. By that time we had received fresh news of the happenings at the Cabinet meeting this afternoon. The pro-EDC Ministers put on a

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drive to bring about, at some point in the EDC debate, a suspension of the proceedings until another conference of the Brussels type could take place. There will be a big wrangle, lasting at least 24 hours, before there is clarification of the Government's and the Parliament's intentions.

I sent an urgent telegram to Washington as follows:

"SENT: SECSTATE. COLED 30. NIACT.

"LIMITED DISTRIBUTION.

"If conference such as contemplated COLED 29 is called, and this time by French, and question of US and UK attendance is raised, have I authorization to say US will accept? Your reply is urgent and I trust will be favorable. Interesting developments are in course.

"Another but related subject for General Smith, the crystal clarity of the British position as regards the French is like the Beaverkill after torrential rains. As you know, fishing in troubled waters is not easy and I need a little discretion, which I would not abuse, about matter mentioned in first paragraph. BRUCE."

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